

New bone overlay with a dragon image discovered at madzhar fortified settlement

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Abstract

© 2018 Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan, A.Kh. Khalikov Archaeology Institute. All rights reserved. Systematic studies are conducted at Madzhar settlement by the "Kaffa" expedition of the Institute of Archaeology named after A.Kh. Khalikov of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan within the framework of the State Program of the Republic of Tatarstan "Preservation of the National Identity of the Tatar People (2014–2019)". Madzhar fortified settlement represents the remains of the Golden Horde town of Madzhar located near the contemporary town of Budennovsk in Stavropol Krai. The work is dedicated to the discovery of a bone article at the fortified settlement in question. A carved bone overlay with a dragon image was discovered at the archaeological excavations of 2016. The bone overlay was found during cleaning of the pavement of a medieval town street. A paved street was discovered in a Golden Horde town for the first time in history. The studied area of the pavement consisted of 174 fragments of locally manufactured defective bricks, 115 sandstones and 127 broken brick fragments. The period of operation of the town street and, correspondingly, the time of loss of the bone overlay correspond to the reign of Djanibek Khan, and has been dated on the basis of 12 coins. The carved overlay was made of thick horn. A four-leaved medallion with a rectangular pointed upper edge dimensioned 72×72 mm, which resembles a lotus bud, features a carved image of a dragon. The symbolics of the dragon image was thoroughly studied. Suggestions are made in relation to the possible location of manufacture of such products and the use of similar articles in the territory of the Mongol Empire.

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Keywords

Archaeological studies, Dragon, Fire pearl, Madzhar fortified settlement, The Golden Horde

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